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**THE CHALLENGES OF BORDER ISSUES,
DOCUMENTATION, AND INFRASTRUCTURE
IN INTRA-AFRICAN TRADE**

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Aliya Monique Daniels

ABSTRACT

In 21st century post-colonial Africa, African leaders have visualised, mobilised, and worked towards economic advancement nationally, regionally, and continentally. In the past 60 or more years there has been a concentration on regional integration as to achieve economic growth and increase global competitiveness. More recently, intra-African trade has emerged as an essential component of continental economic advancement. However, there have been many obstacles that have hindered intra-African trade from achieving its potential and functioning in a way that truly benefits the continent. This dissertation will examine the effect that some of those challenges and obstacles (including border issues, documentation, and the lack of essential infrastructure), have had on intra-African trade.

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CHAPTER 1

1.1 INTRODUCTION

Africa is considered to be the world's final economic frontier, assessed in 2019 by the World Bank to include many of the fastest-growing economies around the world.^{1 2} Explosive growth, rapidly increasing entrepreneurship, global funding, and government action have fuelled a surge of opportunity and advancement in Africa. However, various problems continue to plague the continent and hinder what was formerly considered to be the 'dark continent'³ from reaching its full potential.

One of the most important ways by which Africa will continue to create and expand economic growth is through intra-African trade, which may hold the key to the next level of the continent's advancement, as it not only increases economic growth, but promotes healthy governmental cooperation and unification, and in the process encourages cultural and political networking throughout the continent.

Despite its considerable value, intra-African trade is plagued by many challenges that hinder its progress and advancement. These include poor infrastructure, corruption, poor communication, lack of information and distrust between African leaders, nations, and citizens. In particular the infrastructure deficits in many African nations are unable to support increased trade and movement, which is a major hindrance to increasing trade volumes in Africa.

¹ Charlie Robertson, 'This African Nation Has The Fastest Growing Economy in the World, *CNBC Africa*, April 10, 2019, <https://www.cnbc africa.com/news/west-africa/2019/04/10/this-african-nation-has-the-fastest-growing-economy-in-the-world/>.

² World Bank, *The World Bank in Africa*, <https://www.worldbank.org/en/region/afr/overview>, accessed November 11, 2019.

1.2 INFRASTRUCTURE IN AFRICA

Infrastructure forms the basis of societal life, including everything from highways and roads, to public works such as sewage systems and pipelines, telecommunications and satellite systems, airports and maritime ports, to electricity, internet connectivity, and rural infrastructure. Infrastructure can be broadly classified into two categories: hard and soft, with additional subcategories, including agricultural, rural, and maritime infrastructure. Nations require adequate infrastructure to both function and advance economically, politically, and socially, and African countries are no exception. Whilst Africa is predicted to include the fastest growing economies in the world⁴, many nations lack fundamental infrastructure, which stems from a historical legacy of European colonisation on the continent. From the 1960s, when the first African nations gained independence, the new African leaders sought to attain political and economic independence. In the 1970s, there was a move to improve infrastructure from the basic infrastructure constructed and supplied by the former colonial powers. Rapid increases in infrastructure, especially in railways and other sectors, were undone by corruption, wars, and a host of other factors leading to a decline in infrastructure building in the 1980s and beyond. In 2019, many African nations continue to have poor or non-existent infrastructure, which affects the quality of life of African citizens as well as the economic health of nations across the continent.

⁴ African Development Bank 'African Economic Outlook: 2017, Special Theme: Entrepreneurship and Industrialization'
https://www.afdb.org/fileadmin/uploads/afdb/Documents/Publications/AEO_2017_Report_Full_English.pdf accessed 12 November, 2019

1.3 THE DEVELOPMENT OF REGIONAL INTEGRATION IN AFRICA

After the fight for colonial independence, African nations faced the difficult task of building the continent. From the establishment of the Organization of African Unity and then the African Union, African nations sought economic freedom and growth through market integration, in particular by way of regional integration.⁵ The development of regional integration can be traced back to the ideology and writings of Kwame Nkrumah in the early 1960s. After leading the fight for independence from colonial rule in the West African nation of Ghana, Nkrumah, who was the first democratically elected president in post-colonial Africa and a strong believer in Pan-Africanism, championed continental integration with full economic independence from European nations.⁶ Nkrumah, and other African leaders believed in that African economic and political integration would lead to a 'United States of Africa' in which a completely unified African continent would be the key to economic strength and success.

However, even before post-colonial integration, there were other versions of regional economic communities (RECs) on the continent, some of which still exist today. One such is the Southern African Customs Union (SACU), which was formed in 1910 and is the oldest existing customs union in the world. SACU comprised five southern African nations, Botswana, Lesotho, Namibia, South Africa, and Swaziland. However, it was originally formed during the apartheid era and was not based on the same ideologies and philosophies as other post-colonial regional communities. The regional economic communities and unions formed during the 1960s were created under the Organization of

⁵ Rene N'Guettia Kouassi, 'The Itinerary of the African Integration Process: An Overview of the Historical Landmarks', July 2007 1(2) *African Integration Review*,.

⁶ Richard S Mukisa, and Bankole Thompson, 'Prerequisites for Economic Integration in Africa: An Analysis of the Abuja Treaty, Africa Today', (1995) 42 (4th Quarter,), *The Politics of Economic Integration in Africa*,.

African Unity (the OAU, the predecessor of the African Union) created on May 25 1963 in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia. President Nkrumah and Emperor Haile Selassie of Ethiopia, who were prime movers of the Pan African movement on the continent, were the champions and founders of the OAU.⁷

In 1958, the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa (UNECA/ECA) was formed, in which the OAU and UNECA signed the Agreement of Co-Operation of the Organization of African Unity and the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa, which was an important development for the continent.

With the focus on regional integration, countries sought development, economic independence, and self-reliance and formed regional economic communities (RECs) to achieve economic agreement and partnership and on some levels, unification. There are currently eight RECs in Africa that are recognised by both the African Union and the United Nations, covering the entire African mainland and island nations. Governments, and numerous organisations and development networks have identified both regional integration and the creation of transport corridors as the keys to Africa's advancement.⁸

1.4 TRADE IN AFRICA

On a continent with nearly 1.1 billion people and an annual GDP of \$2.74 trillion (in 2014),⁹ there is a constant need for economic advancement in Africa. As previously stated, one of the most important paths towards economic advancement in Africa is

⁷, Rene N'Guettia Kouassi, 'The Itinerary of the African Integration Process: An Overview of the Historical Landmarks', 1(2) July 2007 *African Integration Review*.

⁸ African Union, *Infrastructure Corridors Are Key to Africa's Intra-Regional Trade, Job Creation*, Stakeholders Agree at PIDA Session, 27 November, 2017 <https://au.int/en/pressreleases/20171127/infrastructure-corridors-are-key-africa's-intra-regional-trade-job-creation>

⁹ World Bank, Combined Value of GDP of African Countries (2014).

engagement in intra-continental and global trade. In Africa, only 18% of trade is intra-African trade,¹⁰ and on the global level African trade only constitutes between 1%-3% of international trade.¹¹ In the past 20 years, these figures have not changed substantially, and in many cases have decreased. African nations have fallen behind developing nations and regions of the world at an alarming pace, holding Africa back from the financial gains and development desperately needed.

1.5 INTERNATIONAL TRADE LAW THEORIES IN AFRICA

Formal international trade law theory dates back to the late 1700s, when the pioneer of international trade law theory, Adam Smith, coined the concept of ‘Absolute Advantage’,¹² in terms of which countries should export what they produce most efficiently and import what they are less efficient at producing. Smith’s idea of ‘advantage’ included price, time, and quality, and focused on broadening the division of labour and thus expanding the market¹³, and less on international trade itself.

In response to gaps that he believed were present in the theory of absolute advantage, David Ricardo created the theory of ‘Comparative Advantage’ in the early 1800s by which he attempted to answer the critical question that arises when a country would like to trade with another country over which they did not have absolute advantage. While Smith’s theory of absolute advantage explained why nations engaged in international trade, it did not answer nor explain Ricardo’s question. Ricardo’s theory asserted that nations engage in international trade to broaden the division of labour as well as

¹⁰ African Development Bank (2017) African Economic Outlook: *Special Theme: Entrepreneurship and Industrialization*.

¹¹ World Trade Organization, *World Trade Statistical Review* (2016).

¹² Michael J Trebilcock, *Advanced Introduction to International Trade Law*, 2, (2015), Edward Elgar Publishing.

¹³ Ibid

producing for export the products or goods that it produced most efficiently. Furthermore, Ricardo's theory argued that a nation should only 'specialize in producing and exporting goods in which its comparative advantage is the greatest. . . [a]nd should import goods in which its comparative disadvantage is greatest'.¹⁴ This meant that even if one country was more efficient at producing and trading certain products than another country, the time and energy used for production should be considered in deciding whether that country should produce those goods or import them from other nations. In the *Principles of Political Economy*, Ricardo argued that only exchanges which were advantageous to both parties, (nations in the context of international trade), should be engaged in. Ricardo's theory is considered to be the standard in international trade theory and many theories of international economics and politics, including Jacob Viner's economic theory on integration and a host of other international theories, follow his line.

In assessing intra-African trade, theories of international trade are important because they generally fail to explain why African nations severely underutilise other African nations as trade partners. While most African nations have an abundance of natural resources, including raw materials, they generally have weak or non-existent manufacturing industries,¹⁵ and most natural resources are exported to nations outside of the continent.

1.6 THE INTERSECTION OF INFRASTRUCTURE, REGIONAL INTEGRATION, AND INTRA-AFRICAN TRADE

One of the biggest impediments for trade, both on the continent and globally, is a lack of adequate infrastructure that supports trade. Africa does not lack capacity for

¹⁴ Michael J Trebilcock, *Advanced Introduction to International Trade Law*.2, 2015, Edward Elgar Publishing.

¹⁵ Landry Signe, and Chelsea Johnson, 'The Potential of Manufacturing and Industrialization in Africa: Trends, Opportunities, and Strategies', (2018) *Africa Growth Initiative*, Brookings Institution.

infrastructure development, but has lacked the funding for infrastructure. African nations have planned numerous infrastructure projects over the last six decades, but funding gaps have remained a major impediment. The African Development Bank estimates that the continent requires between \$130-\$170 billion annually to meet its infrastructure needs and that there is a current annual financing deficit of \$68-\$108 billion.¹⁶ Furthermore, Reuters reports that 10 African nations face a \$1 trillion infrastructure funding gap needed to meet the 2040 United Nations Sustainable Development Goals.¹⁷

The underutilisation of existing infrastructure such as that of railways is another major impediment. Whilst Africa has railway infrastructure in most regions on the continent, capable of facilitating links, railway transportation both for cargo and people is in steady decline¹⁸ and severely underused. In the South African Development Community (SADC) region alone, there are more than 33 000km of connected railway (the SADC Interconnected Regional Rail Network, also known as the IIRN), most of which is also underutilised.

Despite this, plans are being developed to both create and improve transport networks throughout Africa. In southern (and connecting through central) Africa, corridor projects are both in use and in development. The Maputo Corridor in south-eastern Africa links Botswana, South Africa, Swaziland, and Zimbabwe through from the port of Maputo in Mozambique.¹⁹ The Walvis Bay Corridor which has been in planning and development

¹⁶ African Development Bank, *Africa's Infrastructure: Great Potential but Little Impact on Inclusive Growth*, 2018

¹⁷ Joe Bavier,, 'Ten African Nations Face \$1 trillion Infrastructure Funding Gap', *Reuters*, July 3, 2018, <https://www.reuters.com/article/us-africa-infrastructure/ten-african-nations-face-1-trillion-infrastructure-funding-gap-idUSKBN1JT2AZ>.

¹⁸ Christin Roby,, *NEPAD Reprioritizes Focus on intra-African trade via Regional Transport Corridors*, <https://www.nepad.org/news/nepad-reprioritizes-focus-intra-african-trade-regional-transport-corridors>

¹⁹ The Maputo Corridor Logistics Initiative, <https://www.mcli.co.za/>

since 2000, seeks to connect the port of Walvis Bay in Namibia throughout central and southern Africa. The Walvis Bay corridor crosses northern Namibia to the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) through Zambia. The Dar es Salaam Corridor is another transportation corridor, connecting the port of Dar Es Salaam in Tanzania to the DRC, through Tanzania, Malawi, and Zambia. Additionally, the North-South corridor, a corridor project that was championed by former South African president Jacob Zuma, seeks to remedy the lack of usage of the available rail network for trading in southern Africa countries. It essentially connects South Africa (from the port of Durban on the south-eastern coast) to the DRC and the countries in between the two nations, utilising railway lines in Botswana, South Africa, Zimbabwe and Zambia.

The TransAfrica highway is another extremely important initiative, funded by both public and private actors worldwide, including the AU and the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa (UNECA) that seeks to connect Africa through highways and railroad.²⁰ The TransAfrica highway will use existing networks, while expanding and creating highways and roads touching the majority of nations on the African mainland.

1.7 RESEARCH QUESTION, AIMS, AND METHODOLOGY

I conducted research interviews, with permission of the University of Cape Town's Law Faculty Research Ethics Committee (clearance report reference, L0088-2018). The research question was: **'How the Lack of Linked Infrastructure Hinders Economic Advancement in Africa Despite Efforts of Regional Integration.'**

²⁰ African Development Bank and United Nations Economic Commission for Africa, August 14, 2003. *Review of the Implementation Status of the Trans African Highways and the Missing Links, Volume 2: Description of Corridors*,

The research methods consisted of literature review, doctrinal research and empirical research. I conducted research on the experiences of small and medium business owners who engage in intra-African trade, either as the owners of logistic companies or business owners who manufacture and/or purchase and ship their goods throughout Africa. My research found that there is not one individual issue that disrupts intra-African trade, and that the issues are complex and in many-cases interconnected and/or a combination of many problems. One of the major issues that arose was problems at borders, comprising many separate but connected issues, including and especially issues with documentation in the form of passports, clearance documents, registration of vehicles, bills of lading, visas, and permits, and also includes customs duties, tariffs, and taxes required for intra-African trade.

1.8- SUMMARY

Intra-African trade is an important component of African economic development and stability, especially as the continent strives to compete in an increasingly globalised economic environment. However, as detailed, there are many challenges facing intra-African trade. These problems, as well as recommendations and possible solutions will be discussed throughout the dissertation.

CHAPTER 2: REGIONAL INTEGRATION AND TRADE IN AFRICA

2.1 INTRODUCTION

After fighting for independence from colonial powers for decades, African nations endeavoured to become viable contenders within the global economy but struggled to build independent, stable economies. With the goal of economic advancement and independence, post-independence Africa utilised regional integration and economic communities as the primary methods for achieving these goals.²¹ In their quest for economic independence and autonomy, African leaders have looked to regional integration in the past six or more decades as a primary tool for domestic and continental economic advancement and growth – largely driven by the Pan-Africanist ideologies of post-colonial freedom fighters and leaders such as Kwame Nkrumah and the former leader of Libya, Muammar Gaddafi.

Regional integration is defined as ‘a process by which a group of nation states voluntarily and in various degrees have access to each other’s markets’.²² The hallmark of regional integration is market integration – one of the four theories of regionalism (the other three being development integration, regional cooperation, and regional integration).²³

There are five levels of market integration, namely:

- 1) Free trade area
- 2) Customs union
- 3) Common market
- 4) Economic union; and

²¹ Rene N’Guettia Kouassi, ‘The Itinerary of the African Integration Process: An Overview of the Historical Landmarks’, (2007) 1(2) *African Integration Review*,.

²² Trebilcock, op cit.

²³ Margaret Lee, ‘Regionalism in Africa: A Part of Problem or A Part of Solution’, (2002) 9 Numéro Spécial *POLIS*.

5) Political union.²⁴

With these five levels of market integration, nation states around the world have joined together in various configurations of the above that serve their respective nations as well as their regional communities, and the African continent has attempted to do the same. The regional economic communities (RECs) and unions formed in Africa during the 1960s were created under the OAU,²⁵ which was the precursor of the existing African Union. The OAU was created on 25 May 1963 in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia. President Nkrumah and Emperor Haile Selassie, who were the founders of the OAU under the aegis of pan-Africanism.

2.2 CURRENT STATE OF REGIONAL INTEGRATION IN AFRICA

As at July 7, 2019, the African Continental Free Trade Agreement, the AfCFTA, has been signed by 54 nations in Africa, creating the largest trade bloc in the world since the creation of the WTO.²⁶ Such commencement of the operational phase of the AfCFTA, placed regional integration in Africa in an exciting transitional space on the economic trajectory long envisioned by African leaders and nations. The AfCFTA is expected to increase and promote the decades-long quest for widespread trade and the elimination of tariffs on most goods traded in Africa.²⁷ With intra-African trade amounting to 17% of African exports in 2017²⁸, the effect of the AfCFTA and the promotion of free trade in

²⁴, Jean-Paul Rodrigue, *The Geography of Transport Systems*, 4 ed, Routledge, (2017).

²⁵ Kouassi op cit.

²⁶, Katarina Hoijs 'African Trade Pact Starts Operations with 54 Signatories', July 7, 2019, Bloomberg, <https://www.bloomberg.com/news/articles/2019-07-07/african-union-landmark-trade-pact-grows-as-benin-nigeria-join>.

²⁷ <https://au.int/en/treaties/agreement-establishing-african-continental-free-trade-area>

²⁸FRANCE 24 July 7, 2019, 'Leaders Launch Landmark Trade Deal at African Union Summit', <https://www.france24.com/en/20190707-africa-au-leaders-sign-landmark-afcfta-trade-deal-african-union-summit-niamey>

Africa is expected to make a tremendous impact on creating and promoting trade on the continent.

As referenced in Chapter One, in addition to the AfCFTA, there are multiple regional economic communities (REC's) throughout the continent with individual systems and processes in place supporting intra-African trade on a regional basis.

There are currently eight recognised communities (RECs) in Africa:²⁹

1. UMA – Arab Maghreb Union
2. COMESA – Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa.
3. CEN-SAD – The Community of Sahel- Saharan States
4. EAC – The East African Community
5. ECCAS – Economic Community of Central African States
6. ECOWAS – Economic Community of West African States
7. IGAD – Intergovernmental Authority on Development
8. SADC – South African Development Community

RECs have been critical to the development of regional integration in Africa, but have faced numerous challenges. For example African nations joining and becoming active parties to multiple RECs has caused problems with implementation and enforcement of RECs. The problem is widespread in that most African nations are members of more than one REC. Tanzania is part of the EAC and SADC; Ghana, Nigeria, and the Gambia are members of ECOWAS and CEN-SAD, and Malawi, Zambia, and Zimbabwe are part of both SADC and COMESA.

RECs also face a major lack of funding for the processes and institutions that support regional integration.³⁰ This is in addition to the lack of coordination between African

²⁹ UNECA, Regional Economic Communities, <https://www.uneca.org/oria/pages/regional-economic-communities>, accessed November 10, 2019

nations, a shortage of support from government institutions and civil society organisations, as well as the lack of overall human capacity.³¹ All this has caused many problems with RECs despite overall support for RECs and regional integration by African leaders and institutions.

Furthermore, in post-colonial Africa, African nations face problems with regional integration regarding state autonomy and political sovereignty. Soumana Sako, in *Challenges Facing RECs*, stated that ‘many nations have trouble fully integrating as they are not ‘fully prepared for partial surrender and the pooling of sovereignty that is critical for the success of any integration scheme’.³² In addition, political conflicts and wars have hindered REC development. Furthermore, many of these challenges have also created problems in infrastructure, including barriers to the flow of trade.³³ However, despite the many obstacles that the regional integration processes face in Africa, the common goal of free trade as well as an African common market, remains a goal of most African countries and regional institutions.

In 2004, The African Union released the Protocol on Relations between the African Union and Regional Economic Communities (REC’s), intended to be the framework of RECs progress on the trajectory of common economic unity. This followed the Protocol between the African Economic Community and the Regional Economic Communities that came into effect in 1998³⁴, which serves as a framework for cooperation and coordination for nations in REC’s in their dealings with the African Union. Additionally,

³⁰ Soumana Sako, *Challenges facing Africa’s Regional Economic Communities in Capacity Building*, The African Capacity Building Foundation, 2006.

³¹ Sako *ibid*.

³² Sako *op cit* , 12

³³ Sako, *op cit* 12

³⁴ 2008, Protocol on Relations Between the REC’s and the AU, African Union, 2008.

in the past two to three years, many African nations have signed charters with independent African civil service organisations such as AfroChampions,³⁵ showing dedication to both pan-Africanism and intra-African trade, and economic growth throughout the continent.

2.3 THE EFFECT OF POOR INFRASTRUCTURE ON REGIONAL INTEGRATION DEVELOPMENT

Trade, economic cohesion, and unity between African nations are the principal goals of regional integration on the continent. As trade is virtually impossible without viable infrastructure, creating viable networks to make trade possible is one of the most important factors in promoting trade. Thus, transportation and transportation networks are critical factors in regional economic development and consequently regional integration on the continent.

Trading depends on the transportation of goods, services, and even people being efficient and quick; when infrastructure in the form of roads, railways, electricity and telecommunications is inadequate, trade will not move effectively, efficiently, or in a timely manner. This conclusion is echoed by the IMF, which stated in a report in May that the AfCFTA will be an economic game changer³⁶. However, the IMF also stated that reducing or even eliminating tariffs on trade was simply not enough.³⁷ Trade in Africa simply cannot be economically sound or improve to the required level without the proper

³⁵ AfroChampions, ABOUT, <http://afrochampions.com>, accessed June 11, 2019.

³⁶ Boureima Balima, 'Economic 'Game Changer? African Leaders Launch Free-Trade Zone', Reuters, July 7, 2019, <https://www.reuters.com/article/us-africa-trade/economic-game-changer-african-leaders-launch-free-trade-zone-idUSKCN1U20BX>

³⁷ 'Leaders Launch Landmark Trade Deal at African Union Summit', FRANCE24, July 7, 2019, <https://www.france24.com/en/20190707-africa-au-leaders-sign-landmark-afcfta-trade-deal-african-union-summit-niamey>

infrastructure; and extremely poor transportation networks have been restricting trade on the continent for the past 50 years. With poor infrastructure, trade with other nations is not cost-effective, as reflected in intra-African trade, especially in landlocked nations where movement of goods is extremely time-consuming and excessively costly, especially in comparison to other developing nations, and especially in comparison to developed nations. This is crucial to development of regional integration because regional integration and economic communities are intended to make economic development easier and more effective; if movement of goods is difficult and excessively expensive between those nations, then regional development is impeded. In the article ‘Infrastructure and Economic Development’,³⁸ the authors reference and review a paper by Kennedy K. Mbekeani, in which he states that ‘quantity and quality of infrastructure reduces costs and improves service quality in international trade which determines competitiveness in domestic and export markets . . .’³⁹ Furthermore, the authors reference Mbekeani’s argument that ‘better infrastructure with improved customs tariffs will unlock many of the bottlenecks and stimulate international trade’. This is noteworthy as Africa has historically had low volumes of both international and intra-African trade. African nations have very low trade volumes, especially when compared to other developing nations, such as South-East Asian countries, including those within the Association of South East Asian Nations (ASEAN) Free Trade Area, which import and export hundreds of millions of dollars of goods (per country)⁴⁰ and products annually. This is monumentally higher than imports and exports of Sub-Saharan African nations,

³⁸ Olu Ajakaiye, and Myhuli Ncube, ‘Infrastructure and Economic Development in Africa: An Overview’, (2010) 19 *Journal of African Economies*, AERC Supplement 1, i3-i12.

³⁹ Olu and Ncube op cit.

⁴⁰ ASEAN Trade and Investment Stats, 2017, https://www.aseanstats.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/08/ASEAN_trade_and_investment.pdf. Accessed November 15, 2019.

which in 2017 amounted to \$212 075 million.⁴¹ According to the UN Economic Development in Africa (UNECA) Report 2019, intra-African trade only accounted for 2% of intra-regional trade, compared to 47% for America and 61% for Asia.⁴² In 2019, UNCTAD reported that Africa and Asia ‘are the only regions with a rising trend in intra-regional trade’.⁴³

2.4 CONCLUSION

Regional integration has been important to the development of intra-African trade. Despite the many criticisms of economists and social scientists who have questioned and criticised the need for regional integration in Africa,⁴⁴ African nations have continued to create and join regional integration institutions. These include the regional economic communities that exist all over the continent, in addition to the AfCFTA entering its operational phase at the African Union’s Twelfth Extraordinary Session in July 2019. However, in order for regional integration to truly succeed on the continent, there must be improvements to the various processes that enable integration to function correctly. These include improvements to infrastructure, especially that infrastructure that enables trade to flow across Africa, as well as other issues such as improved communication and the cooperation and commitment of African leaders.

⁴¹ World Integrated Trade Solution, 2017, <https://wits.worldbank.org/countrysnapshot/en/SSF/textview>, accessed November 12, 2019.

⁴² UNCTAD, Economic Development in Africa Report 2019, <https://unctad.org/en/pages/PressRelease.aspx?OriginalVersionID=520>, accessed November 12, 2019.

⁴³ <https://unctad.org/en/pages/PressRelease.aspx?OriginalVersionID=520>, accessed November 12, 2019.

⁴⁴ Margaret Lee, ‘Regionalism in Africa: A Part of Problem or A Part of Solution’, (2002) Vol. 9, Numéro Spécial, *POLIS*.

Robert Davies, ‘Promoting Regional Integration in Southern Africa: An Analysis of Prospects and Problems from A South African Perspective’(1996) 5(5) *African Security Review*,

CHAPTER 3: INFRASTRUCTURE IN AFRICA

3.1 INTRODUCTION

Infrastructure is the thread that holds the fabric of any society together. Infrastructure, soft and hard, rural and urban, maritime, and technological, is the key to cohesive communities, cities, and countries worldwide. Furthermore, infrastructure, in all its forms is not only the foundation of any society, but its proper function is crucial to economic stability and advancement.

As discussed in Chapter One, infrastructure virtually encompasses every aspect of modern life and society. Infrastructure not only includes the framework of homes, schools, workplaces, and transportation systems, but also includes electricity, plumbing, and telephonic systems. It includes waterways, sewage systems, and highways. Furthermore, it also includes telecommunications systems, including the internet and telephone lines.

Internationally, the need for adequate infrastructure, both basic and complex, is essential for modern life, economic empowerment and global competitiveness. In Africa, adequate infrastructure is crucial for economic success, but has been lacking and largely inadequate. In fact, in many African countries, especially in rural and ‘undeveloped’ areas, the infrastructure to support even the most basic services has been either inadequate or completely absent. The reasons for this includes colonisation, destruction of infrastructure through armed conflict or all-out war, as well as the lack of government focus and funding on infrastructure, as discussed below.

Infrastructure is typically divided into two categories – ‘hard infrastructure’ and ‘soft infrastructure’. The former includes roads, buildings, highways, sewage systems,

freeways, and the latter includes agricultural, electrical, and technological systems, including telecommunications, financial, and healthcare systems. Hard infrastructure in the form of roads, railways, and transportation systems, and its effect on intra-African trade will be discussed in this dissertation. The advancement and development of both hard and soft infrastructure is important for development, but the hard infrastructure, especially roads and highways, are extremely important to enable trade to flourish.

In Africa, basic and advanced infrastructure in most countries is either lacking or largely inadequate; in many rural and undeveloped areas crucial infrastructure is completely absent. This is also significant as African citizens are moving to cities and urban areas at a rapid rate⁴⁵, particularly for better economic opportunities which makes the demand for infrastructure even more pressing.

3.2 THE HISTORY AND CURRENT STATE OF INFRASTRUCTURE IN AFRICA

Over the past 300 years, every African nation, except for Ethiopia⁴⁶ (and to certain extent, Liberia)⁴⁷ was colonised, exploited, and oppressed by European nations seeking to expand their colonial domination, as well as freely take minerals, diamonds, raw materials, and other goods from the rich African soil. Under their exceptionally oppressive colonial rule, European nations and leaders only constructed the infrastructure needed for the advancement of their goals, except in countries such as South Africa and

⁴⁵ Mariama Awumbila, *Drivers of Migration and Urbanization in Africa: Key Trends and Issues*, United Nations Expert Group Meeting on Sustainable Cities, Human Mobility, and International Migration. (September 2017)

⁴⁶ Alemayehu Geda,, 'The Political Economy of Growth in Ethiopia', Chapter 4, Volume 2, in *The Political Economy of Economic Growth in Africa, 1960-2000: Country Case Studies*, Cambridge University Press, reprint February 19, 2015.

⁴⁷ Stephen Ellis, 'Liberia 1989-1994: A Study of Ethnic and Spiritual Violence', (1995) 94(37) *African Affairs*, 165-197,.

Namibia, Zimbabwe and Zambia, formerly known as Southern Rhodesia and Northern Rhodesia, where many Europeans settled and claimed the land as their own, which led to a different mode of oppressive rule. Thus for most countries in Africa, the infrastructure, including roads and highways, was crude at best and most places lacked water, pipelines, and sewage systems. As Shemmy Simuyemba stated in his article ‘Linking Africa Through Regional Infrastructure’, ‘ . . . transportation systems and related infrastructure in Africa were conceived and constructed to meet the economic needs of the colonial powers and were not intended to support balanced economic development to meet the needs and aspirations of African countries’.⁴⁸

After liberation from colonial rule, newly independent African nations focused on building their economies and creating stable political systems with emphasis on political sovereignty. Development of infrastructure was focused on supporting their immediate needs, resulting in a lack of advancement of infrastructure in many African countries, especially in rural areas. Even now, many countries continue to lack adequate electricity, water, and sewage/plumbing systems, as well as houses, schools, roads, and highways – especially in rural and undeveloped areas. In the 1960s and 1970s the development of hard infrastructure in some African nations peaked. However, many nations became embroiled in devastating civil wars throughout the 1980s and 1990s (some of which continue today) that destroyed both colonial infrastructure and newer infrastructure, including buildings, roads, and other structures. Over the past six decades, conflicts and wars have been a major reason for the lack or loss of crucial infrastructure in Africa. This destruction has been devastating, especially where infrastructure had in any event been

⁴⁸ Shemmy Simuyemba, ‘Linking Africa Through Regional infrastructure’, USAID Regional Center for Southern Africa, African Development Bank, 2000.

substandard.⁴⁹ Furthermore, war on the African continent has caused extreme setbacks for economic growth, especially with regard to intra-African trade,

The DRC is an important case study as one of the biggest countries in Africa, as well as being one of the most mineral-rich countries in the world. Additionally, the DRC is not only landlocked, but also sits in the middle of the continent, and has historically and continuously engaged in armed conflict and war which has caused immense infrastructure damage across the country. In an article on infrastructure in conflict areas, Ali, et al found that the infrastructure in the DRC is ‘severely deficient even compared to other [developing and/or] low-income countries.’⁵⁰ They stated that even with infrastructure improvement (and hundreds of millions of dollars have been pledged for infrastructure projects in the DRC), the question was whether, in the light of conflict, infrastructure improvements would actually bring ‘benefit to the local economy’.⁵¹ The DRC was an example of the continuing damage that armed conflict has on the continent, not only in respect of African trade, but with economic stability.

3.3 THE CURRENT STATE OF INFRASTRUCTURE IN AFRICA

There are plans throughout Africa to rapidly create and improve infrastructure in all facets; from roads and railways to electrical infrastructure, there is a drive to advance Africa in order to compete in the global economy. This demands focus on building the lacking and/or absent infrastructure across the continent.

⁴⁹ Lila Ammons, ‘Consequences of War on African Countries Social and Economic Development’, (April 1996) 39(1) *African Studies Review*, 67-82

⁵⁰ Ali, Rubababa, Barra, A. Federico, Berg, Claudia N. and more, *Infrastructure in Conflict Prone and Fragile Environments: Evidence from Democratic Republic of Congo*, Policy Research Working Paper Series 7273, The World Bank (January 2015).

⁵¹ Ali et al, op cit.

Although much of the lack of current infrastructure in Africa shares a strong historical basis, the 54 African nations face different challenges and solutions to their deficits. As James Bond stated in 'Infrastructure in Africa': 'Africa is not homogenous, and their infrastructure problems and solutions are not everywhere the same'.⁵² In the SADC region for example, infrastructure in some areas can easily resemble that of infrastructure in Europe or North America. But even within the SADC, some countries can have vastly superior roads, railways, and structures, compared to other nations, within SADC. The difference of infrastructure in South Africa compared to its neighbour Mozambique is a good example of this. This phenomenon can also exist within individual countries such as in Nigeria; the infrastructure in Abuja is far superior to that of Lagos, which is currently the most populous city in Africa.⁵³ The infrastructure in the same country can vastly differ city to city and can't be explained by one simple factor, especially in countries like Nigeria, which has the second strongest economy on the continent.

African nations are not homogenous and the state of infrastructure is not the same in every country. However, the fact remains that the infrastructure is generally poor or non-existent in many places. As discussed above, the reasons for this vary from governments focusing their funds on other projects and the consequences of war, and corruption. African nations have embarked on projects to remedy lack of linked infrastructure, especially connected, functioning roads and railways throughout the continent. The development of infrastructural networks between and through African countries is crucial for trade advancement on the continent. Other countries and continents across the world

⁵² James Bond, 'Infrastructure in Africa', (2016) 8(3) *Global Journal of Emerging Market Economies*, 309-333

⁵³ United Nations, The World's Cities In 2018: Data Booklet, https://www.un.org/en/events/citiesday/assets/pdf/the_worlds_cities_in_2018_data_booklet.pdf, accessed November 10, 2019.

are connected through viable infrastructure networks. In North America, Canada, Mexico, and the United States (all signatories of NAFTA) are connected by highways and roads which enable trade to flow from county to country. Furthermore, in the EU, the countries are efficiently connected to each other through roads, railways, and ports, as well as through/with well-established and maintained aviation networks.

Linked infrastructure is also important in minimising transportation costs. A 1996 World Bank Study found that transport costs in Africa were a bigger issue and a ‘far more restrictive barrier’ than tariffs for exports on the continent.⁵⁴ More than 20 years after the report was published in 1996, transport costs and poor infrastructure are still among the most important issues hindering trade on the continent. However, initiatives such as the transAfrican highway suggest that African and global institutions are working to improve transportation networks throughout Africa to support increased trade movement and efficiency, which should significantly lessen transport costs as over time.

Additionally, many African nations (like many nations around the world) have also begun to join infrastructure accreditation organisations to enhance credibility of infrastructure organisation and planning. Infrastructure accreditation institutions, which are bodies both regional and international, assess infrastructure developments and ensure that they conform to international standards.⁵⁵ Projects being accredited also work to ensure that African infrastructure projects adhere to a global standard, which is important to both intra-African and international trade. Some of the accreditation organisations that African nations have joined include the African Accreditation Cooperation (AFRAC) and

⁵⁴ Shemmy Simuyemba,, *Linking Africa Through Regional infrastructure*, USAID Regional Center for Southern Africa, African Development Bank, 2000.

⁵⁵ ‘ILAC, AFRAC now recognized under the ILAC MRA’, https://ilac.org/latest_ilac_news/afrac-now-recognised-under-the-ilac-mra/ accessed November 11, 2019.

the African Organization for Standardization.⁵⁶ Africa's joining and becoming active members of accrediting organisations helps standardise and create accountability for quality infrastructure programmes continent-wide. Ensuring global standards 'build[s] confidence in African produced goods and services and facilitates their acceptance on the global market . . .'⁵⁷

In the past decade, African leaders have shown the will to move forward with infrastructure projects throughout the continent. The trans-African highway, as mentioned above, is an important development in infrastructure and has been championed by African leaders continent-wide. There have been other major infrastructure projects that African presidents and leaders have supported and brought to fruition, including the new Suez Canal in Egypt, the Ethiopia Light Rail System, and the Lake Turkana Wind Project.⁵⁸ Furthermore, in September 2015, Guinea joined the Republic of Congo and Niger to inaugurate Guinea's 240 MW Kaleta Hydropower Dam⁵⁹, with up to an annual generating capacity of 965 million kwh. Not only does the dam serve Guinea and surrounding countries, but up to 30% of the output goes to Gambia, Guinea-Bissau, and Senegal.⁶⁰ In the past 10 years or more, African leaders have initiated, joined, and/or engaged in infrastructure initiatives throughout the continent, including the Presidential Infrastructure Champions Initiative (PICI), proposed by former South African president

⁵⁶, Ronald Josias, *Building Quality Infrastructure in Africa*- Overview of Accreditation and Pan African Quality 4 November 2014

⁵⁷ Ibid

⁵⁸ World Economic Forum, 13 Game Changing African Infrastructure Projects, May 4, 2016, <https://www.weforum.org/agenda/2016/05/13-game-changing-african-infrastructure-projects>

⁵⁹ World Economic Forum, 13 Game Changing African Infrastructure Projects, May 4, 2016, <https://www.weforum.org/agenda/2016/05/13-game-changing-african-infrastructure-projects>

⁶⁰ Gregory Pointdexter, 'Guinea Increases Generating Capacity with US \$526 million 240-MW Kaleta Hydroelectric Facility', October 1, 2015, <https://www.hydroreview.com/2015/10/01/guinea-increases-generating-capacity-with-us-526-million-240-mw-kaleta-hydroelectric-facility/#gref>

Jacob Zuma in 2010. The initiative launched and supported infrastructure projects throughout the continent, many of which reached implementation stage by 2018.⁶¹

The New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD) has been a driving force behind many infrastructure initiatives (including PICI) and has brought together many African leaders in various capacities to accelerate progress on the continent, including various summit meetings, such as NEPAD's Strategic Dialogue on Advancing Infrastructure Development in Africa summit held in June of 2018 and NEPAD signing a memorandum of understanding (MOU) with the Sustainable Infrastructure Foundation in December 2017 in Namibia.⁶² In 2019, there have been many conferences and summits at which African leaders have discussed or initiated planning of infrastructure projects, many of which will directly benefit intra-African trade. In 2019, there was a BOMA forum held in Nairobi, Kenya, where African leaders, including opposition leaders came together to discuss and pledge infrastructure plans for the country.⁶³ The participation of African leaders in initiatives such as the above demonstrates a degree of commitment to increase and improve infrastructure in their countries, which will ultimately contribute to economic growth and theoretically increase intra-African trade.

3.4 AFRICAN INFRASTRUCTURE: CAPABILITY AND CONCLUSION

Infrastructure is still one of many major non-tariff barriers to trade in Africa. As Greg Gajewski stated in 'Performing African Trade and Regional Integration: The Tripartite

⁶¹ AU PIDA, Presidential Infrastructure Champions Initiative, <https://www.au-pida.org/presidential-infrastructure-champion-initiative-pici/>, accessed December 1, 2019.

⁶² NEPAD, 'NEPAD Agency Signs Aide-Memoire with Sustainable Infrastructure Foundation', <https://www.nepad.org/news/nepad-agency-signs-aide-memoire-sustainable-infrastructure-foundation>, accessed November 27, 2019.

⁶³ Bob Koigi, 'Kenya Calls on African Governments to Assist Private Sector Participate in Infrastructure Development', April 19, 2019, <https://africabusinesscommunities.com/news/kenya-calls-on-african-governments-to-assist-private-sector-participate-in-infrastructure-development/>

FTA and the Role of Development Corridors’: ‘Inadequate and poor roads, railways, ports, waterways, and airports, as well as insufficient energy and telecommunications systems, are serious obstacles to intra- and inter-regional trade in Africa.’⁶⁴

Infrastructure projects aim to bring vast improvements to trade, movement, and accessibility in Africa. The trans-Africa highway seeks to connect the entire mainland of Africa and will theoretically allow an individual to drive from Durban, South Africa, to Sidi Amar, Algeria, in seven days⁶⁵, from where they can then take a ferry to Europe. The capacity to make such journeys is one of the reasons why the development and implementation of the transAfrican highway is so important, especially for landlocked countries.

Upon its completion, the transAfrican highway will be an important development for African transport industries and trade both in and outside Africa. For the many landlocked countries in Africa, dilapidated and/or non existing highways, together with the lack of accessible linked infrastructure, drastically increases transportation times, and costs. James Bond in ‘Infrastructure in Africa’, discussed how expensive both in currency and time it is to import goods in Africa, compared to elsewhere in the world. He found that for landlocked countries in Africa, ‘the cost of trading is 50 times higher than in coastal African countries’. Bond compared the cost of importing a 20-foot container in sub-Saharan Africa(SSA) to importing the same size container in Singapore, and found that the average cost/time in sub-Saharan Africa (SSA) was USD\$2 793/38 days, versus

⁶⁴ Greg Gajewski,, *Performing African Trade and Regional Integration: The Tripartite FTA and the Role of Development Corridors*, August 30 2011 No. 6, The German Marshall Fund of the United States, *Connections*.

⁶⁵ Google Maps Directions Search: Durban, South Africa to Sidi Amar, Algeria, accessed on June 7, 2019.

Singapore at cost/time: USD\$440/4 days.⁶⁶ The extreme difference in both time and cost demonstrates the importance of the creation and improvement of transportation networks in Africa to enable the continent to compete globally, and the trans-African highway is a crucial step in Africa's trade growth. It will expand on previously established transportation networks such as the Maputo Corridor, one of the more prominent transportation corridors in Africa which has historically allowed and enabled both intra-African and global international trade to flow through the SADC region in Southern Africa, from the port of Maputo to pass through Mozambique, South Africa, Zimbabwe, Swaziland, and even up to Zambia. Another transportation network that has worked very well in the past decade is the Trans-Kalahari Corridor, which leads from ports in both Windhoek and Walvis Bay, Namibia, to Gauteng, South Africa. There also exist transport corridors in both East and West Africa. The Dakar-Lagos highway, a project that has intermittently been in progress for nearly 40 years, is one of the many transport corridors in Africa that the trans-African highway is expanding.

While linked infrastructure is exceptionally important to trade in Africa, general and holistic improvements to the infrastructure in individual nations are equally crucial. In a 2001 article, titled 'Infrastructure, Geographical Disadvantage, Transport Costs, and Trade', the authors estimated that 'poor infrastructure accounts for 40% of predicted transport costs for coastal countries and up to 60% for landlocked countries'.⁶⁷ Although this article was written nearly 20 years ago, the fact remains that poor infrastructure severely hinders trade, especially in Africa. The authors continue to state that 'an

⁶⁶ James Bond, 'Infrastructure in Africa', (2016) 8(3) *Global Journal of Emerging Market Economies*, 309-333

⁶⁷ Nuno Limao and Anthony J. Venables, 'Infrastructure, Geographical Disadvantage, Transport Costs, and Trade', (2001) 14,(3) *The World Bank Economic review* 451-479.

improvement in (a country's) own and transit countries' infrastructure from the 25th percentile to the 75th percentile" overcomes more than half the disadvantage associated with being landlocked'.⁶⁸

Additionally, Shemmy Simuyemba, in his article 'Linking Africa through Regional Infrastructure', stated that 'Africa's competitiveness in a global economy requires that Africa's infrastructure is overhauled and that African countries take concentrated measures both individually and collectively to modernize and transform the continent's infrastructure'.⁶⁹

The next chapter focuses on fieldwork findings from research on the impact of poor infrastructure in Africa as well as other pressing issues in intra-African trade.

⁶⁸ Nuno Limao and Anthony J. Venables op cit 451-479.

⁶⁹ Shemmy Simuyemba,, *Linking Africa through Regional Infrastructure*, USAID Regional Center for Southern Africa, African Development Bank, 2000.

CHAPTER 4: FIELDWORK FINDINGS

4.1 INTRODUCTION

In this study, I conducted interviews with permission of the University of Cape Town's Law Faculty Research Ethics Committee clearance report L0088-2018, attempting to answer or explain 'How the Lack of Linked Infrastructure Hinders Economic Advancement in Africa Despite Efforts of Regional Integration.' The ethics clearance was approved on September 6, 2018 for a period of 12 months.

Data Collection: I used my extended network in Africa to find small and medium sized business owners engaging in intra-African trade in different capacities. Some of the interviewees owned logistics companies and transported goods both throughout Africa and internationally. Some interviewees were business owners who purchased and/or manufactured goods that were transported across the continent and globally. Some of the interviewees both manufactured and transported their goods themselves. Others purchased and transported goods, products and services. The interviewees' cargoes included oil and oil products, food and food supplies, textiles, mixed cargo, timber, cleaning products, and quartz. The responses of eight interviewees are represented in the findings. Their responses were a representation of their own thoughts and not that of any outside businesses, institutions, and/or organizations with which they were affiliated. The interviews and research responses do not purport to represent the entire state of affairs of intra-African trade, but that of individual business owners who engage in intra-African trade throughout the continent.

Interview Schedule: I used an interview format, asking 14 questions designed to elicit answers to the overall research question about linked infrastructure and economic advancement in Africa.

The interview questions are as follows:

- 1) Are you a business owner or logistics/transportation company?
- 2) What countries in Africa do you transport to and from?
- 3) Do you transport across the African continent or regionally? What regions do you primarily transport to/from?
- 4) How long have you been in business in Africa? Have you had a similar business outside of the continent?
- 5) What kinds of goods/materials are transported?
- 6) What are the major issues that you encounter when transporting goods/products across countries in Africa?
- 7) Do you have many delays when transporting inside the continent? What are the major causes of the delays and issues faced?
- 8) Do you transport your goods outside of Africa? If so, is it easier for you to export your goods/products outside Africa or do you face similar issues as you do within Africa (if you do face issues)?
- 9) Do you often have issues at border posts? What issues do you face? Can you expand on those issues?
- 10) Do you have similar issues when transporting goods/products domestically (if you transport domestically)?
- 11) What are the easier routes (country to country) you transport to in Africa? What are the more difficult routes in Africa?
- 12) What are the major issues that you/your company/transporters come across when transporting goods/products other than border issues and what are the major complaints?
- 13) In your opinion, what can be done to solve these problems or alleviate the issues?
- 14) Any further comments or concerns you would like to add:

My research findings are separated into five sections:

1. Border issues and informal trade issues;
2. Infrastructure and transportation;
3. Documentation;
4. Language factors;
5. Communication.

These were the most frequently discussed challenges that interviewees considered to be a hindrance to their business enterprises, and consequently intra-African trade.

The interviewees primarily imported/exported and transported their goods and products through Southern and Central Africa, especially throughout the SADC region, although one interviewee transported goods, particularly oil, in West Africa; and most interviewees had transported goods and products through countries in East Africa, including Ethiopia, Tanzania, and Uganda, at least once. Furthermore, interviewees both imported/exported and transported various types of goods and products that cut across many different industries on the continent, ranging from cleaning products, to copper, oil and oil products, timber, mining chemicals, tobacco, concrete, timber, food products, including nuts and dry goods, building materials, and even quartz and porcelain, to countries across the continent. Their experiences varied; some interviewees were positive and optimistic, while others concentrated on the negative aspects; but all the interviewees and participants were vocal about trade in Africa and the issues plaguing the continent's advancement and growth.

Interestingly, the experiences of business owners of products varied from those of logistics companies which primarily transported goods for customers.

4.2 BORDER ISSUES AND INFORMAL TRADE ISSUES

In the article ‘Defining the South Infrastructure of Border Crossings . . . ’ Donna F Davis and Wesley Friske discussed the importance of “soft infrastructure” at border crossings⁷⁰. While the authors were discussing the United States and Canada, their analysis of the issues at border crossings provides an insight into the issue of inefficiencies of border crossings globally that is relevant to intra-African trade. The authors stated: ‘Fundamentally, border crossings serve dual purposes. They are simultaneously barriers to ensure enforcement of regulations and gateways to facilitate international trade.’⁷¹ The authors went on to state: ‘Multiple layers of bureaucracy at country borders increase costs, lengthen delays, and increase uncertainty for clearance of imports and exports and are now seen as posing greater barriers to trade than tariffs.’⁷² This was found to be the case by all of my interviewees, who complained about inefficiencies at borders, ranging from weighbridges to border delays, to corruption, excessive procedures and so on. The interviewees’ experiences and responses regarding problems at borders was that they would endure unless standardised systems both in each individual country but also throughout continent are introduced and enforced.

Interviewees said that border delays in Africa could be as short as two to three days or as long as three weeks or more. In intra-African trade, these delays cause uncertainty, bitterness, and a lack of trust in the process experienced by business owners and citizens alike. Interviewees faced border issues on a weekly, if not daily basis. Border crossings are intended to enforce the laws and regulations of countries regarding the movement of

⁷⁰ Donna F. Davis and Wesley Friske, ‘Defining the Soft Infrastructure of Border Crossings: A Case of the Canada-US Border’, (2013) 43(4) *American Review of Canadian Studies*, 477-493.

⁷¹ Ibid.

⁷² Ibid.

goods, people, and services, in addition to encouraging and facilitating trade worldwide. The same applies in Africa. However, issues at borders, including corruption, overcrowding, inadequate infrastructure, and even disease, were some of the most complained about topics by the interviewees.

Logistics companies, especially, often complained that most control points were ill-equipped for the amount of trade that passed through those borders. Many border crossings were built decades ago, and some had only two or three control posts, where hundreds of trucks were expected to pass through daily. As one interviewee said: 'Border infrastructure simply cannot handle high volumes of trucks and trade.'

Interviewees generally spoke positively about transporting oil, as oil must pass through borders quickly in the hot sun to prevent explosions, especially in countries such as Zimbabwe and Botswana. Furthermore, interviewees generally spoke positively about maritime ports. Interviewees explained that when transporting goods internationally by ship, they dealt directly with the shipping companies and found that the processes were much simpler and more streamlined than transporting goods across Africa by highway.

One Stop borders, where drivers stop only once to leave and enter countries, were also spoken about very positively. Interviewees found that they saved them time and money. Additionally, many interviewees felt that increasing one stop border posts across the continent would alleviate many of the issues that occur in intra-African trade.

Furthermore, interviewees also spoke of a 'quadripoint', called Kazungula, which serves Botswana, Namibia, Zambia, and Zimbabwe. This border post is unique because it touches four countries and is purportedly the only place in the world where four countries

meet.⁷³ There were also at least 60 tripoint border posts in Africa.⁷⁴ Interviewees spoke both positively and negatively of tripoint and the Kazungula (quadripoint) border posts.

Interviewees complained about lack of uniformity and corruption, mentioning that the attitudes as well as requirements could change from border official to border official. One border agent or official might accept documents as complete, but another might assert that essential documents were missing.

Interviewees also complained that border overcrowding was a major issue, which could turn a one-day border crossing into a week or more. Interviewees explained that many border crossings in Africa were built many years ago and weren't created with large-scale trade in mind. One interviewee, an owner of a small logistics company, explained that some smaller international border crossings in Africa only had one or two customs stations for trucks to pass through, which led to extreme overcrowding. The overcrowding could also lead to disease due to the lack of bathrooms/showers/and other facilities on site, while drivers waited for days and weeks to cross over, creating unhealthy conditions both for drivers and workers at the border.

Another major challenge that interviewees faced included unnecessary bureaucracy, border delays, bribery, corruption, inefficiency, as well as a lack of streamlined or consistent processes across borders as well as within the same country. These informal trade issues were numerous and wide-ranging and were one of the most discussed topics by nearly all of interviewees.

⁷³ Ian Brownlie, Ian, *African Boundaries: A legal and Diplomatic Encyclopedia*, C. Hurst and Co. Publishers, 1979.

⁷⁴ Jan S Krogh, 'Tripoints of Africa', http://geosite.jankrogh.com/borders/tripoints/tp_africa.htm, accessed on 20 November 2019.

4.2.1 BRIBERY AND CORRUPTION

Interviewees stated that generally, transporters customarily factored in the cost of bribery and corruption to the fees they charged clients to transport goods. One interviewee budgeted approximately R1 000 rand for police in every country that they travelled to, adding that drivers usually called the logistics companies before giving money to police. The interviewee stated that they had to pay amounts of up to R25 000 to a single police officer.

An interviewee also complained about the use of certain computer-based systems used in intra-African trade such as ASCYUDA. ASCYUDA, an acronym for the Automated System for Customs Data, is used in some countries across Africa. The interviewee complained that while ASCYUDA is a good system and ordinarily works well, sometimes border agents and officials, knowing that drivers had delivery deadlines, would allegedly lie, claiming that the systems were down for days so that truck drivers would be compelled to bribe them to allow them to pass through to the next border.

4.2.2 THEFT

Interviewees also raised the problem of theft en route. Petty theft, armed robberies, and even hijacking's regularly occurred. Drivers faced the risk of theft of their cargo from the moment they left their point of origin for the destination, and on the return journey. Most interviewees built in amounts stolen to their fees, while other customers requested armed guards to accompany the driver in order to prevent robberies. Another type of theft was when thieves jumped on to the trucks and unloaded the goods (usually with trucks with curtain side trailers, also referred to as tarps). This was likely to occur on bad roads, where drivers were forced to drive very slowly. According to an interviewee, thieves

would hide on the side of the road and jump on the side of truck and slowly offload goods, by throwing them on the road.

Unscrupulous drivers hired by logistics companies also committed theft. In my personal border experience (referenced in this chapter), I spoke of a driver of an oil tanker who parked his vehicle near the border of the country of origin and sold all the oil that he was transporting on the black market.

Insurance, known as ‘Goods in Transit’ or GIT insurance is available. However, according to interviewees, GIT insurance is usually very expensive, based on risk analysis, making the overall transport cost higher. According to an interviewee, most logistics companies do not use GIT insurance because ‘customers want cheap rates’.

4.3 INFRASTRUCTURE AND TRANSPORTATION

Transportation and infrastructure are arguably the most important factors in international trade, as they are the instruments that drive the movements of goods, people, and services worldwide. In discussing infrastructure and transportation, this sub-chapter will examine the infrastructure that enables trade, including roads, railways, and ports. In the course of the research, I found that generally, business owners who purchased and/or manufactured goods/products had very different complaints to those of logistics companies. Most of the complaints and responses from logistics companies were centred on issues at the borders, including corruption, and bribery. Furthermore, I found that logistics companies were less focused on the length of time of trips or the condition of the roads or infrastructure, as they were most concerned about getting the products to the final destination.

Infrastructure in Africa varies from country to country and can drastically change from one country to the next – even from one province or city to the next in the same country. Despite this state of affairs, interviewees did not complain about this as much as I expected. They did, however, explain how poor infrastructure hindered their experiences in intra-African trade. Many interviewees simply felt that it was ‘the way it is’ and dealt with poor infrastructure accordingly and made the adjustments as needed. According to both business owners and logistics companies, roads in most African countries are very bad, making driving very difficult. One interviewee stated that on many routes there were many potholes, some very big, and drivers had to move slowly to avoid them. This also led to the issues of theft described in the previous chapter. Thieves would hide around bad roads, jump on trucks, and unload the goods. Such infrastructure issues, especially theft, could result in drivers arriving with half the load they started with, with the loss borne by the companies or covered by the expensive GIT insurance.

Another interviewee complained that the poor road conditions would cause breakdowns, impeding the drivers/transporters ability to deliver the cargo on time.

Another interviewee gave a breakdown of the different road issues in certain SADC countries outside South Africa. He said: ‘In Zimbabwe, the roads are narrow and bumpy; in Zambia, there are many potholes; in Botswana, there is a 200km game drive that transporters have to drive through, from Francistown to Nalta, which is extremely difficult.’ The interviewee also spoke of transporting goods in the DRC as ‘hard all the way around’.

Interviewees also spoke of long stretches of roads with no police, hospitals or other essential services. This was a major issue when trucks broke down and drivers sometimes

had to wait for days for assistance or repairs. This was particularly troubling in the case of accidents, with no hospitals or ambulance services nearby. In emergencies in areas with a complete absence of infrastructure and infrastructure service, drivers had to wait days for help, if any, to arrive.

4.4 DOCUMENTATION

Documentation problems are a major issue in intra-African trade. In fact, such complaints were so numerous that it influenced the change of the title of the (present) dissertation. Many interviewees spoke of the processes of intra-African trade not being streamlined or uniform, especially in respect of documentation. For purposes of this research, ‘documentation’ includes but is not limited to passports, clearance documents, registration of vehicles, bills of lading, visas, and permits. I also include custom duties, tariffs, and taxes as documentation because they are often grouped together. As one interviewee, said: ‘It’s never enough.’ This same thought was echoed by another interviewee, the owner of a logistics company, who lamented that ‘it could be a brand-new truck, with all the documents (that are generally needed), and the truck will still be lacking something, usually some form of documentation’.

Another major challenge identified in the interviews, concerned drivers’ lack of knowledge of laws, policies, and or required documentation. They mentioned the problems they faced by drivers being taken advantage of by law enforcement and various officials because of their lack of knowledge or understanding of documentation needed or policies in place. In many instances, even if drivers are given all of the correct documentation and have done the route numerous times, they simply don’t know or understand the laws, especially those at international border crossings. According to

interviewees, law enforcement and border officials use the lack of knowledge of drivers to bribe them to get additional money. Another issue that occurs when drivers pick up ‘backloads’ for the return journey and customers provide the wrong documentation, accidentally or purposely, or false documents and permits, which cause major problems for drivers being demanded large amounts of cash by way of bribes to prevent the trucks being impounded. This then leads to logistics companies needing to retrieve the trucks, sometimes having to travel to the location in question through several countries and in many cases paying large sums (often several thousand US dollars) to retrieve the truck.

Interviewees also raised as a major issue the fact that most of the documentation needed to cross borders was still done with physical paper and not electronically. In many cases, hundreds of documents/papers were needed to cross borders, and if one document was missing it could delay or even end the entire process. Paper documents, had to be stamped or signed by hand, and if one stamp or signature was missing on one document, the entire process might be stalled or stopped. This is one of the reasons why many of the interviewees employ clearing agents, which expedites the process; but even with clearing agents, problems may arise, especially if a clearing agent is at the border of Mozambique and South Africa, and the driver is in Zambia or Botswana transporting the cargo or goods. Furthermore, when transporting goods from country to country, some documents must be in different languages, which drivers might not understand. According to interviewees, this causes cause further confusion and difficulties, especially when dealing with different officials. African countries have many different official languages, including Arabic, English, French, and Portuguese, and documents may be in any

combination of these languages. Many interviewees also felt that this was another example of the lack of uniform and streamlined processes in intra-African trade

Many interviewees mentioned the issue of cross-border permits. For transporters to be able to transport goods from country to country, permits are needed, as has been discussed above. These permits (cross-border permits) can become very expensive, as well as difficult to procure in the light of the regulations regarding the receipt of the permits. One interviewee explained that in South Africa, the cost of a cross-border permit was roughly R7,000 for a three-month permit, and R20,000 for a one-year permit.

Another complaint that interviewees mentioned as a hindrance to ‘free’ trade in Africa was the so-called ‘three-country rule’, according to which drivers may not enter or go through more than three countries on a single trip. Furthermore, drivers cannot pick up and load in countries where the truck is not registered, also subject to the three-country rule. Interviewees also complained of problems with border processes, such as ASCYUDA, which interviewees described as ‘being a very good/helpful system internationally that hampers trade in Africa’.

4.5 LANGUAGE CHALLENGES

In transporting goods across a continent with many different official languages, interviewees mentioned that language issues could be especially challenging. From border to border, document-to-document, there were numerous issues that arose with language difficulties. In the course of my research, I found that the problems between English and French speakers could be especially difficult, especially with successive crossings from English to French countries, and then back to English, or any derivative version. So, companies attempt to hire drivers who speak both languages. Drivers

especially experience problem, especially as drivers leave the SADC region and enter countries such as the DRC, where there is an abrupt language change to French from English and other languages, if coming from Zambia. One interviewee spoke of how language in the DRC could be a major barrier when transporting goods to and from the country because of the multiple dialects and/or languages spoken. French, Lingala, and Swahili are all spoken in the DRC, but not every Congolese citizen speaks each dialect or language. For example, many people in Eastern Congo speak Swahili, but not Lingala, and vice versa. The interviewee also spoke of transporting goods to Mozambique, where the primary spoken language spoken is Portuguese, with the result that transporting to and from non-Portuguese speaking countries could be problematic. Many drivers, some from South Africa or Zimbabwe, were unable to communicate adequately.

Because of all this, some of the interviewees that owned logistics companies hire drivers who can speak Swahili as well as English and other local dialects, when transporting to the DRC and Tanzania, usually by hiring Zambian drivers, some of whom are able to speak Swahili. One interviewee found that this made transition easier than for others who only spoke English and/or another local African language of Southern or Eastern Africa.

An interviewee cited a similar problem in West Africa, where French was the official language and the many documents needed to be in French or in both languages.

Language issues go hand-in-hand with communication, an issue that is discussed in the next section.

4.6 COMMUNICATION

Communication, especially in regard to laws and changes in policies from country to country, and even domestically, is a crucial issue not only in trade but also in the movement of people, goods, and services on the continent. From one month to the next, or even one day to the next, a law or regulation can change in any country with little to no notification, or delayed notification, to business owners or logistics companies. Issues such as these can expose drivers who might already be en route to the next country to be ‘caught’ without required documents, too much money, or a host of other possible violations.

One interviewee felt that communication and/or the lack thereof was one of the biggest challenges that he faced in transporting goods across African borders. He spoke of the lack of centralised portals or platforms for information that companies as well as drivers could access for up-to-date information. He also lamented a lack of general widespread notification of updates or changes in laws or regulations from countries regarding intra-African trade. This complaint was echoed by many of the interviewees, who believed that the creation and implementation of an African-wide system that notified the public of changes in laws, regulations and requirements would have a significantly positive impact on intra-African trade.

4.7 INTERVIEWEES’ SOLUTIONS AND IDEAS FOR IMPROVEMENT

All of the interviewees presented ideas and solutions that they felt would significantly improve intra-African trade. Many spoke positively about regional integration, and also

felt that less restrictive trade zones would be very good for intra-African trade. Furthermore, interviewees argued for increasing bilateral trade on the continent and actually implementing the bilateral trade agreements that were currently in place. In this vein many of the interviewees felt the AfCFTA was very promising, emphasising that Africa speaking with one powerful voice as one trade bloc would be much more powerful and influential than as 54 separate economies. Interviewees also generally felt that increasing bilateral trade, especially business-friendly bilateral trade, and actually implementing the bilateral trade agreements currently in place would drastically improve trade and trading conditions in Africa.

Furthermore, every interviewee felt that transporting cargo through the SADC region was generally much easier than transporting their goods and cargo through other regions of Africa. They felt that the SADC had good systems in place, but issues still existed that could be improved, especially with bribery and corruption and border delays. Interviewees also emphasised the need to improve border services, including unified systems, electronic technology, regulatory compliance and active management of challenges and issues. Interviewees also felt that access to a continent-wide information portal would be very useful and that African nations needed websites and/or apps that provided up-to-date information for business owners and logistics companies, especially as Africa was set to enter the next era of intra-African trade. Furthermore, they spoke of increased communication between countries, including ‘government interlinks’.

4.8 PERSONAL BORDER EXPERIENCE

The following is my personal experience at a border crossing/post between two countries in Southern Africa, where I witnessed how problematic documentation issues, bribery,

and corruption were at border crossings. I joined the owners of a small African-owned logistics company to determine why their trucks were being held at the border and to trace another ‘missing’ truck directly across that border that had been immobile for over two weeks with no contact from the driver. In the course of this experience, I spoke to the clearing agent, listened to the issues, and crossed the borders on both sides, with the logistics company.

In the originating country, from the clearing agent process until the moment we were officially to cross the border, the process was generally straightforward. We drove past an extremely long line of trucks and went directly to the clearing agent’s office. The clearing agent immediately asked the business owner for all the truck driver’s passports and documentation, including the bill of lading. The clearing agent then stated that he believed that the documents had been tampered with (a common ‘accusation’ in the course of transporting goods across borders). This suggestion was be echoed by the business owners who confirmed that the truck drivers frequently called, asking them ‘to go check’ (the documents). After typing in his computer, making a few phone calls and faxing documents, the clearing agent stated that ‘everything would be fine’ but the business owners would need to pay him and possibly pay bribes to other border officials. After leaving the clearing agent’s office we proceeded to drive directly to the border, where we planned to cross into the next country to investigate the ‘missing’ truck a few kilometres past the official border crossing. At the official border crossing, as a private individual, I witnessed multiple ‘problems’, especially with documentation, making it easy to visualise the issues endured by truck drivers transporting cargo.

Because the truck (personal, noncommercial vehicle) was ‘financed’, the driver had great difficulty crossing the border on both sides, despite having what the business owner believed to be proper documentation which had often successfully been used in the past. On the side of the border that the logistics company owners and I originated from the police immediately flagged us down and asked for passports and registration. They began to pester us about the vehicle being financed, and despite having documents that showed ownership of the car, they declared that the documents ‘weren’t good enough’. The police began asking for a specific document from a dealer that would need to be emailed immediately. When the driver explained repeatedly, they cross this border (and others) all the time, with these same documents the police began to get very agitated. Eventually, they ordered everyone out of the car except for me and threatened to arrest the business owners that I had accompanied. The officers separated the business owners, took one into a nearby building and the other was questioned beside the vehicle. Two police officers came to my car door and asked me if the businesses owners were ‘telling the truth’, what was the nature of their business, and how long I had known them. I answered the officers forthrightly, and the officers seemed satisfied with my statements and left me to go back to questioning the business owners. After a few minutes, the business owners returned to the vehicle separately and one of the police officers asked for the business-owners’ phone numbers, stating that ‘they would like to go into business with them’. I did not see the owners giving the police money, but there was reference to the exchange of money, as one of the officers thanked the business owners for his ‘tip’.

Later, the owners of the logistics company and I were able to cross the border into the next country, where the border officials and police were even more aggressive than those in the originating country.

4.9 CONCLUSION

The topic for this dissertation that I initially sought to examine and discuss was: **‘How the Lack of Linked Infrastructure Hinders Economic Advancement in Africa Despite Efforts of Regional Integration.’** However, the interviews persuaded me that the complaints of the research participants and their experiences with intra-African trade went beyond mere infrastructure. In fact, problems with infrastructure tended to be one of the last matters that interviewees complained about. Most of the interviewees spoke of documentation, border issues, and corruption as being the major problems that they faced on a daily basis. Many of the interviewees thought of infrastructure as something that they just ‘have to deal with’, when compared with other challenges they encountered. During my personal border experience, I found that I was also less concerned with infrastructure and/or the changes of infrastructure in both countries, especially as dealing with documentation, bribery, and safety at the border was front and centre. Infrastructure was nothing more than an afterthought, especially at border crossings. The interviewees’ complaints and ideas and my personal border experience persuaded me to revisit the topic of my dissertation, changing the topic and title to the current one: **‘The Challenges of Border Issues, Documentation, and Infrastructure in intra-African trade.’**

The research conducted and data gathered gave me an important insight into the day-to-day experiences of those engaged in intra-African trade. Additionally, the research provided first-hand the perspective of small and medium business owners engaged in intra-African trade and the challenges they face. The interviewees' responses, and their ideas for improvements and solutions uncovered important factors for the advancement of intra-African trade. Business owners, logistics companies, and (truck) drivers on the continent constantly encounter the issues and obstacles discussed in this chapter and their experiences should be considered at policy and decision-making levels both on the continent and globally.

CHAPTER 5: TRADE IN AFRICA AND CONCLUSION

5.1. CURRENT STATE OF TRADE AND TRADE PERFORMANCE IN AFRICA

5.2.

This paper discussed challenges that hinder intra-African trade; but these challenges don't just hinder intra-African trade; they slow and stop the movement of people and services across the continent, and ultimately hinder the economic growth across Africa. Historically, Africa has suffered from very low volumes of both intra-African and global trade. Though Africa has exported copious amounts of raw materials and minerals,⁷⁵ the continent has not truly benefited from, nor truly engaged in or immersed in global trade for many reasons, some of which have been discussed in previous chapters of this paper. Not only does Africa import much more than it exports, the rate that Africa engages in trade on both accounts is exceptionally low. According to the World Trade Organization's Statistical Review, 2016, Africa was the second lowest in both exports and imports in developing economies, only trailing behind developing Europe.⁷⁶ While there has been a rapid rise in trade performance in Africa, Africa still lags behind other developing economies across the world. While there are many contributing factors to the low rate of African intra-African trade, immense progress is required to enable Africa to compete both continent-wide and globally. Despite the many impediments, the continent has pushed forward, creating initiatives and projects aimed at increasing trade and development. Many of these initiatives have accelerated progress on the continent. As demonstrated throughout this paper, there have been far-reaching efforts to improve both

⁷⁵ Kieron Monks, 'Why The Wealth of Africa Does Not Make Africans Wealthy' CNN, January 2, 2018, <https://www.cnn.com/2016/04/18/africa/looting-machine-tom-burgis-africa/index.html>.

⁷⁶ World Trade Organization, World Trade Statistical Review 2016.

intra-African and global trade. Improvements through infrastructure include the trans-African highway, and other projects that increase electricity and telecommunication services continent-wide, which will ultimately fuel trade advancement. Regional transport corridors both in use and in development are also used to efficiently transport goods throughout the continent. The trans-African highway is another infrastructure development project in development that will increase intra-African trade. The African continent is progressing towards the goals long envisioned.

However, progress will not fully be realised if the focus remains only on advancements in continental regional integration and infrastructure projects. As the interviewees documented in Chapter 4 demonstrated, there are many challenges that hinder trade on the continent, including bribery and corruption, the lack of uniform and/or standardised processes across countries on the continent, widespread misinformation, as well as the lack of communication from country to country. Furthermore, issues with documentation, including passports, visas, and paperwork needed for drivers to leave one country and enter another tend to be complicated and paper-based.

Even with the formal celebrations that surround many of the new and exciting forward-facing developments in Africa, there have been countless failed initiatives and promises. However, as one interviewee stated: ‘African countries are still new; South Africa is only 25 years old and other countries are only 40-50 years old.’ Africa, as a whole is still very much in post-independence mode and many African nations have been plagued by different catastrophes, including armed conflict and natural disasters while attempting to achieve economic growth and stability. Economic advancement, as well as the advancement of intra-African trade, must be an effort that involves more than the leaders

of African nations. African citizens, civil service institutions and organisations, lobbyists and international support is essential for Africa's success. Furthermore, African nations supporting each other through regional economic communities and institutions and working towards a common goal is crucial.

5.2 THE INTERSECTION, EFFECTS, AND LONG-TERM SOLUTIONS

As many African governmental organisations have discovered, regional transport networks and corridors are the way forward for intra-African trade.⁷⁷ African nations whose outlook on trade has historically been outward facing have truly begun to look and trade inwards. However, for intra-African trade and cross-border trade in Africa to be successful and efficient, regional integration must flourish on the continent. As Shemmy Simuyemba stated almost 20 years ago: 'Regional integration requires both a coordinated set of rules across the region and physical connections such as road, rail and electricity transmission lines between and within countries. It is not enough to simply create regional institutions and coordinate tariffs and regulations at a regional level. Countries need to be connected by road, rail, electricity, and communication networks'.⁷⁸ Simuyemba's comments succinctly illustrate the intersection of regional integration and infrastructure in Africa. For regional integration in Africa to operate effectively, proper, sustainable infrastructure and infrastructure services must be in place. Regional integration in Africa, which has been a goal of most countries since independence, simply cannot work without functioning infrastructure. Functioning infrastructure is without

⁷⁷ Christin Roby, 'NEPAD reprioritizes focus on intra-African trade via Regional Transport Corridors', <https://www.nepad.org/news/nepad-reprioritizes-focus-intra-african-trade-regional-transport-corridors>

⁷⁸ Shemmy Simuyemba, 'Linking Africa Through Regional infrastructure', USAID Regional Center for Southern Africa, African Development Bank, 2000.

doubt the most important aspect and tool or advancement on the continent, especially with regard to the movement of people, goods, and services.

Africa cannot compete in the global economy while the solid infrastructure needed to support trade is lacking. The lack of proper infrastructure in Africa not only slows down and/or disables trade, but renders it extraordinarily more expensive than trade in other continents and regions in the world, even in other so-called developing nations. These issues, especially in the light of Africa's 16 land-locked nations, slow down not only trade but also economic growth. While there are many exciting plans in place, the only real solution is accountability based on the assurance that leaders stick to their pan-African goals and commitments.

5.3 RECOMMENDATIONS

Africa is on a promising trajectory of economic growth, especially in the spheres of both global and intra-African trade. However, border issues, documentation and infrastructure, in addition to many other issues, have hindered the growth of intra-African trade. Intra-African trade is costly, fairly difficult to execute and time-consuming, especially in comparison to trade in other continents. However, despite the many complications that African business owners, logistics companies, and civilians face regionally and continentally, the movement of goods, people, and services in Africa will prevail.

In order to continue to advance Africa's economic growth, the continent must continue to look inward. This includes continuing to expand and utilise regional integration and the promotion of policies that support the growth of intra-African trade.

There are many straightforward solutions to the issues facing trade in Africa, namely:

- Increasing and creating infrastructure, especially infrastructure that supports intra-African trade. This includes the creation of new infrastructure and the maintenance of existing roads, railways, airports and maritime ports throughout the continent – subject, to the enormous infrastructure funding gap requiring billions of dollars annually.
- Advancing the technology of trade; using digital means for documentation instead of using paper documents; the ability to prepay tariffs; and using the same documentation continent-wide.
- The creation of regional or continental (up-to-date) websites, portals, and apps, would decrease confusion and misinformation and undoubtedly alleviate many of the major issues that weaken both the stability and growth of intra-African trade.

Other important issues, including bribery and corruption, critically hinder the growth of intra-African trade, and the solutions are not straightforward, especially without the development of other measures suggested above.

With that said, the implementation of the AfCFTA is an important addition to the advancement of intra-African trade, as an African Free Trade Area is projected to increase the accessibility of intra-African trade. Additionally, the construction of the trans-African highway, signals a significant achievement for the growth of intra-African trade.

Finally, the continued support and initiative of African leaders in improving the obstacles hindering intra-African trade is crucial to the growth and success of trade on the continent.

5.4 CONCLUSION

Africa is on an upward trajectory. Optimism exists in all sectors, progress is being made daily and organisations that support trade are working diligently to increase intra-African trade. The continent that was considered to be ‘the hopeless continent’ only 19 years ago by The Economist⁷⁹ has made great progress. Africa’s growth is persistent, and the advancement of intra-African trade will undoubtedly continue to be a large part of the driving force behind Africa’s continued economic growth.

⁷⁹ The Economist ‘Hopeless Africa’ <https://www.economist.com/leaders/2000/05/11/hopeless-africa>, May 11, 2000.

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